

## Winter Gardening Tips

Winter in the South is milder, which opens up some fantastic opportunities to keep your garden thriving. Here are some useful winter gardening tips:

**Plant Winter Veggies:** Sow seeds for hardy vegetables like kale, collards, spinach, and garlic. These thrive in cooler temperatures.

**Protect Frost-Sensitive Plants:** Cover vulnerable plants with frost blankets or cloths on particularly cold nights.

**Mulch:** Apply a thick layer of mulch to protect plant roots from temperature fluctuations and help retain soil moisture.

**Prune Trees and Shrubs:** Winter is an ideal time to prune deciduous trees and shrubs while they are dormant.

**Water Sparingly:** Since growth slows down in winter, reduce watering frequency. Ensure the soil doesn't stay soggy.

**Prepare Soil for Spring:** Turn the soil and add compost or organic matter to enrich it for spring planting.

**Plant Evergreen Shrubs and Trees:** Add structure and interest to your garden with evergreen plants like hollies, camellias, and magnolias.

**Control Weeds:** Use winter as an opportunity to pull up weeds before they have a chance to establish.

**Keep an Eye on Pests:** Although many pests are less active in winter, some can still cause damage. Monitor your plants and take action if needed.

**Plan Your Spring Garden:** Use the quieter winter months to plan your spring garden. Order seeds, draw up garden layouts, and get ready for the growing season.

### LPMGA

#### GENERAL MEETING

February 5th, 12  
PM

West Regional Li-  
brary  
501 Old Spanish  
Trail  
Scott

#### Board Meeting

February 18th, 1PM  
IRA NELSON  
2206 JOHNSTON ST.

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**MEETINGS**

**2024 LPMGA  
General Meetings**  
First Wednesday  
Monthly  
Daytime: 12:00pm  
Evening: 6 pm

**2024 LPMGA  
Board  
Meetings**  
1pm on Third  
Tuesday

**Dates, times, topics, and locations  
are subject to change**

FEBRUARY 5	FEBRUARY 18
MARCH 5	MARCH 18
APRIL 2	APRIL 15
MAY 7	MAY 20
JUNE 4	JUNE 17
JULY	JULY
AUGUST 2	AUGUST 15
SEPTEMBER 3	SEPTEMBER 16
OCTOBER 1	OCTOBER 21
NOVEMBER 5	NOVEMBER 18
DECEMBER 2	DECEMBER 16

**NOTICE**

**Due to some problems securing meeting rooms at the Southside and Main libraris, the February meeting will be held at the West Regional Library in Scott.**

**Farmers Almanac**  
Since 1818

Although the information you get from this this old magazine is not always scientific I find it an enjoyable read.

It combines early America at its best, delightfully threaded through with a measure of good humor, amusing anecdotes, wise-old weather predictions, helpful hints, and good reading for every member of the family done on a high moral plane.

As I am snow bound I am going through magazines and paperwork and discarding things I no longer need. I found last years Farmers Almanac and it predicted that we would experience a number of winter events that would be unusual.

The new almanac predicted our winter weather would bring a series of storms with rain and snow. Our coldest periods would be in late January into February. They predict an artic blast for most of the country in late January.

This is what the almanac says: “We are “red flagging” the final week of January over most of the eastern half of the country because of a very active storm track that we expect will deliver frequent bouts of heavy precipitation, as well as strong and gusty winds. We would especially highlight the time frames from **January 20 to 23 and 24 to 27**, which could mean copious amounts of snow, rain, sleet, and ice (depending on where you live). “

Pretty darn good for information that is based on some science and a bunch of common sense.

Mary Gladney

## Post-Blizzard - The Time to Plant Citrus



If you are looking for the perfect time to plant citrus trees in Southwest Louisiana, the time is now – certainly not before the blizzard! Recent recommendations suggest that late January until early March are the ideal times to plant these trees.

Contrary to planting advice given for deciduous fruit trees (apples, pears, peaches, plums, etc.) that go dormant in the late fall, citrus trees are not recommended to be planted in the fall and early winter. Because citrus trees hold their leaves throughout the year (evergreens of some sort), the late winter until early spring is the preferred planting time to avoid cold damage that may occur during the coldest parts of winter. The blizzard of 2025 was an exceptional event – so regardless of conventional wisdom, most citrus trees (even mature trees) without adequate shelter are likely to succumb to the cold.

When choosing citrus to plant in the Louisiana home garden, it is important to take note of the most cold-hardy varieties. The most cold-tolerant citrus are kumquats, followed by satsumas. In temperature figures, the cold hardiness of mature satsumas and kumquats is often advertised at 15-18 degrees F for short periods of time. There are a couple of new varieties out of Texas A&M – Arctic Frost and Orange Frost – which can tolerate temperatures down to 10 degrees F. It will be interesting to see if any of the local citrus trees survive this latest cold blast.

When selecting a location to plant citrus in the ground, you want to locate a well-draining spot in full to mostly full sun. For areas that experience occasional temperatures in the low twenties or high teens, a sheltered location away from a north wind is preferred. An alternative to in-ground planting to consider is keeping your citrus tree in a large transportable container that can be relocated during freezing temperatures.

For more information on growing citrus trees and a complete list of recommended cultivars in Louisiana, click here: [Louisiana Home Citrus Production Guide \(lsuagcenter.com\)](https://lsuagcenter.com).

The timing of the blizzard of 2025 validates some of these recommendations, as any citrus trees planted this winter prior to now are very likely nonviable. This historic freeze will certainly kill many tender ornamentals and fruit trees, but the full extent may not be known for some time. The snow may have offered some protection from the coldest temperature effects, so it is best to be patient for now. Although the snow was an incredible sight to behold, I think I'm more adjusted to warmer temperatures. I hope everyone enjoyed the historic winter event, but I'm certainly ready for springtime.



## WHAT PLANT IS THIS?

This plant is a native of China, Taiwan and Southeast Asia, but it was introduced to the USA in 1867. It grows in Zones 8 to 11 and is an evergreen. It is reported to have grown in Japan for over 1,000 years. It is moderately drought-tolerant and likes full sun and loose, well-drained soil and has a moderate rate of growth. The average size is 15 feet by 12 feet, but it can go up to 20 feet by 20 feet.

The leaves of this plant are alternate, simple, stiff and leathery, 5 inches to 10 inches long. Conspicuous veins end in sharp teeth. They are glossy above and rusty and tomentose. These leaves are crowded near the tips of the branches. In late autumn, creamy-white flowers appear which are about 1 1/2 inches across, are somewhat showy, and have a sweet fragrance.

In early spring, yellow-orange, oval, downy fruits appear, which are about 1 inch in diameter. They are borne in clusters. The edible fruit has a sweet plum-like flavor, with 1 to 10 seeds each. The cultivar "Champagne" is said to have the best quality fruit. These provide food for wildlife.

The propagation is by seed. Some plants are cross-pollinated, and some are self-fruitful.

The most common disease affecting this plant is Fire Blight, which is exacerbated by excessive fertilizer.

Do you know what plant this is?

## JANUARY 2025 LAFAYETTE LA SNOW DAY!





## WHAT PLANT IS THIS ANSWER

*Eriobotrya japonica* :  
Japanese plum, Loquat

### From Pest to Guest: Changing Perspectives on Native 'Weeds' in Louisiana Gardens

By: Mandy Hatman

Traditional gardening often pits us against so-called weeds, but many of these plants are actually valuable members of our local ecosystem. Consider the humble Wood Sorrel (*Oxalis stricta*), whose cheerful yellow flowers brighten early spring days. Beyond its aesthetic appeal, this native plant serves as a crucial early-season nectar source for emerging native bees and can even add a lemony zest to salads.

The robust Pokeweed (*Phytolacca americana*), despite its reputation as an unwanted volunteer, plays a vital role in supporting bird populations. Its dark berries provide essential nutrition for songbirds, particularly during fall migration. Similarly, Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*), so often removed from garden edges, offers both fall berries for birds and creates protected habitat for beneficial insects that help control garden pests.

Before declaring a war on weeds, consider: Is this uninvited plant truly causing harm, or does it simply challenge our conventional ideas about garden aesthetics? Many of these natives have evolved alongside local wildlife for thousands of years, creating intricate relationships that support ecosystem health. Native violets (*Viola sororia* and related species), frequently targeted as invaders, serve as irreplaceable host plants for fritillary butterflies (*Speyeria spp.*), making them essential links in our local food web.

Success in modern gardening often lies in finding balance – creating spaces that serve both aesthetic preferences and ecological needs. Consider designating a "wild corner" where these valuable natives can flourish or thoughtfully incorporating select volunteers into existing garden beds. Today's "weed" might become tomorrow's butterfly sanctuary, transforming our gardens from mere ornamental spaces into vibrant ecosystems that support and celebrate local biodiversity. Understanding their roles in our local environment can help us make more informed decisions about garden management, ultimately creating richer, more resilient landscapes that benefit both human and wildlife communities.

## Tips for Sending Effective Emails Through LPMGA

Many of you utilize our mass email system to share volunteer needs, committee updates, meeting notices, and more. That's fantastic—this platform is here to help! To ensure your emails are as effective as possible, please follow these tips:

- **Write your message exactly as you want it sent.**  
This minimizes assumptions and reduces the chances of errors. Always include all necessary details, such as dates, times, locations, and other pertinent information—even for reminders.
- **Include your contact information.**  
Be sure to add your phone number, email, or mailing address (if necessary) so members know how to reach you with questions. I'll include a reply button in the email so recipients can easily email you back.
- **Feel free to include attachments.**  
You can attach files up to 5MB, which will be included in the message.
- **NEW email address.**  
Send all messages to **email@LPMGA.org**

### A Quick Reminder

Please remember that the LPMGA email system is intended exclusively for Master Gardener-related communications. Emails should benefit the organization, align with its mission and vision statements, or directly support one or more of its official programs.

### Email Issues

Some members have reported not receiving LPMGA emails. If this happens to you, please check your spam folder. If you find an LPMGA email there, select it and look for an option like "**Not Spam**" to move it back to your inbox.

By following these guidelines, you'll help ensure smooth and effective communication across our organization.

Anna Gauthier  
LPMGA Email Liaison  
[email@lpmga.org](mailto:email@lpmga.org)

## Pruning Roses for Spring Success

By Mandy Hatman

February marks the perfect moment for rose pruning in South Louisiana gardens, a crucial task that sets the stage for a magnificent spring display. Armed with clean, sharp pruners, gardeners should focus on removing dead, diseased, and crossing branches. This strategic pruning promotes optimal air circulation, which is essential for preventing fungal issues common in our humid climate.

For hybrid tea roses (*Rosa × hybrida*), maintain a height of approximately 24 inches, making decisive cuts at 45-degree angles just above outward-facing buds. This technique encourages outward growth, creating that classic vase-shaped form that maximizes sunlight exposure and air flow. Remember to sanitize your pruning tools with alcohol between plants – this simple step prevents the spread of diseases that could compromise your entire rose garden.

Different rose varieties require tailored approaches. While hybrid teas benefit from aggressive pruning, climbing roses need patience – wait until after their first spring spectacular to conduct any major pruning. Old garden roses, those romantic connections to our horticultural heritage, prefer a gentler touch. Focus solely on removing dead wood and providing light shaping to maintain their naturally graceful forms.

Complete your pruning ritual by applying a fresh layer of mulch and incorporating a balanced fertilizer. This foundation of care supports vigorous spring growth and abundant blooming. Keep your pruning tools sharp throughout the season – clean cuts heal quickly, reducing stress on your plants and minimizing disease entry points.

Save the Date

# Home Fruit Production Workshop

March 27, 2025 | 9:00 am - 3:00 pm  
Rapides Parish Extension Office

Educational presentations by Dr. Mary Helen Ferguson, Dr. Michael Polozola and Mr. Kerry Heafner.  
Registration information to follow.



The Central Louisiana Master Gardeners Association presents

## A Plant Symposium

The Latest Dirt:  
**ADDING COLOR!**

Date: Saturday, March 8, 2025  
9 AM til 2 PM Doors open at 8:30  
Location: 708 Main Street  
Pineville Community Center  
Your \$35 Registration includes:  
Morning Coffee and Treats Lunch Door Prizes

Speakers:  
Kerry Heafner-LSU AgCenter Associate Extension Agent  
Candria Ray- Louisiana Roots Landscaping Company  
James Burnett- JB Art and Plants

Also, there will be Vendors,  
Raffle tickets sold for a Cypress Potting Table,  
and a Silent Auction

Register Online Here by February 23rd: 

For Registration by mail, contact DD Lamartiniere by February 23rd  
at DDL394@att.net, 318-359-5672, or 318-240-8231

The Central Louisiana Master Gardeners Association are hosting a plant symposium on Saturday, March 8. The location will be the Pineville Community Center at 708 Main Street in Pineville.

The handout flyer for the event is attached below, and can be printed out and shared manually or electronically. The online registration form can be accessed through the QR Code in the flyer by using your mobile device camera. Please note preregistration ends on February 23rd.

In case of difficulty accessing the Zeffy online registration form, here is the



## SABINE MASTER GARDENERS' DOWN AND DIRTY 2025 GARDEN SEMINAR

February 15, 2025  
Cypress Bend Resort, 2000 Cypress Bend Pkwy, Many, LA

**Tickets:**  
\$50 each

On-line sales link:  
<https://www.zeffy.com/ticketing/946a37d3-f405-4f32-8d18-76fbc0ac0e2d>



Scan QR Code for Ticket Sales

Get your tickets early before event is sold out!  
\*\*\*Seat selection available this year\*\*\*

A limited number of rooms are available at Cypress Bend Resort for overnight accommodations.

**Activities Include:**

- ~Coffee and treats
- ~Garden Vendors
- ~Lunch
- ~Wagon Raffle
- ~Silent Auction
- ~Door Prizes

**Speakers:**

- ~Allen Owings
- ~Anna Timmerman
- ~David Creech

**Questions?**  
Contact Sabine Parish Extension Office at 318-256-3406

The Sabine Parish Master Gardeners are sponsoring a seminar in February. We are excited about the speakers, vendors and all the planned activities for this seminar. We have been so pleased to have some of your members attending our seminar in the past.

Kathy Johnson  
Sabine Master Gardeners

## The History of Amaryllis: From Myth to Modern Splendor

The amaryllis, with its striking blooms and bold colors, has a history as vibrant as its petals. The name "amaryllis" is derived from a shepherdess in Virgil's pastoral poetry, where she was portrayed as a beautiful maiden. The botanical name, however, has been attributed to the Greek term "amaryllis," meaning "to sparkle."

The amaryllis plant we are familiar with today originally hails from the tropical and subtropical regions of the Americas, particularly from the highlands of Brazil. It was first discovered by European explorers in the late 18th century, who were captivated by its beauty and uniqueness. They brought the bulbs back to Europe, where the plant quickly gained popularity among gardeners and botanists.

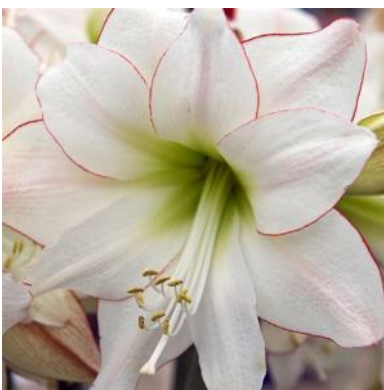
One of the most fascinating aspects of the amaryllis's history is its association with the legend of Amaryllis and Alteo. According to Greek mythology, Amaryllis was a shy maiden who fell in love with the handsome shepherd Alteo. In an attempt to win his affection, she sought advice from the Oracle of Delphi, who told her to pierce her heart with a golden arrow and to walk to his cottage daily. On the 30th day, red flowers sprouted from her blood, and thus, the amaryllis flower was born. This legend not only adds an element of romance to the flower but also explains its vibrant red hue.

As time passed, the amaryllis continued to captivate the hearts of gardeners and plant enthusiasts. The Victorian era, in particular, saw a surge in the plant's popularity. Victorians were known for their passion for horticulture and exotic plants, and the amaryllis, with its showy blossoms, became a symbol of pride and elegance in many gardens.

In modern times, the amaryllis is a favorite for holiday decorations and gifts. Its ability to bloom indoors during the winter months, when most other plants are dormant, makes it a popular choice for brightening up homes and festivities. The cultivation of the amaryllis has also evolved, with hybridization leading to a vast array of colors and patterns beyond the traditional red, including pinks, whites, oranges, and even bi-color varieties.

Today, the amaryllis symbolizes strength and determination, likely owing to its robust growth and stunning blooms. It is also a symbol of beauty and love, echoing the tale of the maiden Amaryllis. Whether grown in a garden or as a potted plant indoors, the amaryllis continues to sparkle and bring joy to all who behold its beauty.

From its mythological roots to its modern-day splendor, the history of the amaryllis is a testament to the enduring allure of this magnificent flower. Its journey from ancient Greece to the tropics of the Americas, and finally to homes and gardens worldwide, is a tale of beauty, romance, and horticultural triumph.



LSU AGRICULTURAL CENTER  
 COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
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for the latest research-based information on just about anything, visit our Web site at [www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com)

innovate . educate . improve lives



## JANUARY 2025

**JANUARY 2025 GENERAL MEETING,  
 W. REGIONAL LIBRARY, SCOTT. FEBRUARY  
 5TH, 2025**

**CENTRAL LOUISIANA,  
 SYMPOSIUM ,FEBRUARY 8TH PINEVILLE.**

**DOWN AND DIRTY, FEBRUARY 15TH, MANY  
 LA**

**BOARD MEETING, IRA NELSON,  
 FEBRUARY 18TH**

*Gardener's Gazette* is issued to all members of the Lafayette Parish Master Gardeners' Program. All members are encouraged to submit news, educational features, and photographs. **The deadline for all submissions is the 17th of each month for publication in the next month's issue unless otherwise noted.**

Please send newsletter items to:

Editor Mary Gladney [newsletter@lpnga.org](mailto:newsletter@lpnga.org)

The Master Gardener program is a division of the

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The AgCenter website is [www.lsuagcenter.com](http://www.lsuagcenter.com)

The Louisiana cooperative extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. Louisiana State University and A&M College, Louisiana Governing Bodies, Southern University, and the United States Department of Agriculture A State Partner in the Cooperative Extension System.

It is the policy of the Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service that no person shall be subjected to discrimination on the grounds of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, or disability.

If you have a disability which requires special assistance for your participation in our meetings, please call the LSU AgCenter 291-7090

**Please note: All meeting and event dates, times,  
 and locations are subject to change.**